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Return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin

Return or restitution of cultural property to the countries of origin

Report by the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides a summary of the activities undertaken by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in combating illicit trafficking in cultural property and promoting its return to the countries of origin or restitution in the case of illicit appropriation, since the previous report submitted to the General Assembly on the matter, in 2015 (A/70/365). It includes recommendations for the protection of cultural heritage and cultural property.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/76, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), to submit to it, at its seventy-third session, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The report contains information regarding activities undertaken between 2015 and 2018.

II. Ratification of the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property

2. Since 2015, Benin, Botswana, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Monaco and the United Arab Emirates have become party to the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970 Convention), bringing the number of States parties to 137.

3. Furthermore, since 2012, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, South Africa, the Syrian Arab Republic and Tunisia have become parties to the UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects, adopted by the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law in 1995, bringing the number of States Parties to 43.

III. Statutory meetings

4. The third session of the Subsidiary Committee of the Meeting of States Parties to the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property took place from 28 to 30 September 2015 at UNESCO headquarters. At that session, the Subsidiary Committee examined national reports submitted by member States on measures taken in application of the Convention and requested the Secretariat to present an updated format of the questionnaire on national reports. Additionally, the Committee discussed proposals for the implementation of a road map for the fulfilment of the functions of the Subsidiary Committee, as previously adopted during its extraordinary session held on 18 May 2015. Concrete decisions were adopted covering various implementation activities dedicated to the promotion of the Convention, ranging from capacity-building workshops to awareness-raising initiatives.[1]

5. The fourth session of the Subsidiary Committee took place at UNESCO headquarters, in Paris, from 26 to 28 September 2016. In their joint meeting, the chairpersons of the UNESCO conventions on culture echoed the call to encourage the exchange of information and synergies among the treaties. The secretariat presented the "Standard action plan for the return and restitution of cultural property", underlining that the document is an indicative tool at the disposal of Member States. Furthermore, several other topics were discussed, including the online sales of

[1] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), document C70/15/3.SC/Decisions, available at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/3SC_List_of_Decisions_EN.pdf.

cultural objects, illicit trafficking of documentary heritage and the repatriation of ceremonial objects and human remains.[2]

6. The twentieth session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or its Restitution in case of Illicit Appropriation took place at UNESCO headquarters on 29 and 30 September 2016. With regards to the only pending case before the Committee, regarding the Parthenon sculptures, the Intergovernmental Committee acknowledged Greece's request to launch a mediation procedure and the fact that the United Kingdom declined to accede to this request. The Committee welcomed the development of the ArThemis database on return and restitution cases.[3]

7. The fourth Meeting of States Parties to the 1970 Convention was held on 15 and 16 May 2017 at UNESCO headquarters. As follow up to the findings of the Internal Oversight Service regarding the evaluation of UNESCO standard-setting work in the culture sector (see the 1970 Convention, part II), States parties further discussed the recommendations concerning capacity-building and awareness-raising, international cooperation, dialogue and partnerships, periodic reporting and identifying key challenges. Additionally, States parties discussed the relevance of Security Council resolutions 2199 (2015), 2253 (2015) and 2347 (2017) and highlighted the importance of regularly providing information on their implementation of these resolutions, as well as any information regarding artefacts seized within their territories originating from Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Mali, the Syrian Arab Republic or Yemen. The States parties also welcomed the new questionnaire for the 2019 reporting period, in addition to approving the budget for the fund of the 1970 Convention.[4]

8. During its fifth session, held from 17 to 19 May 2017, the Subsidiary Committee discussed the importance of educational and awareness-raising activities on the illicit trafficking of cultural property. By encouraging the development of e-learning options and online informative videos on preventive measures, the Committee welcomed the creation of the University Twinning and networking scheme on the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property and considered the project an appropriate method to strengthen and develop educational tools related to the fight against illicit trafficking. Furthermore, in view of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the 1970 Convention in 2020, the Committee requested the development of a questionnaire to identify potential measures to strengthen the implementation, efficiency and visibility of the Convention in all its aspects — legal, political and structural — including the opportunity to establish a list of good practices. Moreover, the Committee welcomed the proposal to develop an electronic tool for the periodic reporting exercise[5] to monitor the implementation of the 1970 Convention.

9. The sixth session of the Subsidiary Committee took place on 28 and 29 May 2018 at UNESCO headquarters. During this session, discussions focused on States parties' responses to the questionnaire regarding the means of strengthening the implementation, efficiency and promotion of the 1970 Convention. On this occasion, Member States emphasized the need to strengthen the link between the Subsidiary Committee and the Intergovernmental Committee. Moreover, the Committee welcomed representatives from Iraq, Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen to

[2] UNESCO, document C70/16/4.SC/Decisions, available at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/Final_Decision_4SC.pdf.

[3] UNESCO, document ICPRCP/16/20.COM/Decisions, available at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/ICPRCP_final_01.pdf.

[4] UNESCO, document C70/16/4.SC/Decisions.

[5] UNESCO, document C70/17/5.SC/Decisions.REV, available at www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/images/5SC_FINAL_EN_REV.pdf.

discuss the current challenges and risks regarding the protection of cultural heritage. Furthermore, the Committee was a platform for fruitful exchanges of good practices. Armenia, Mexico, Sweden and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela presented cases to the Committee in this regard.

10. The twenty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee took place on 30 and 31 May 2018 at UNESCO headquarters. A new case was presented before the Committee regarding the Broken Hill skull (Zambia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), in addition to the case of the Parthenon sculptures (Greece and the United Kingdom). In both cases, the Committee encouraged the parties involved to reach a mutually agreeable solution. The Committee also requested that a day be allocated to a forum of discussions on return and restitution of cultural property and to establish a working group for the revision of the rules of procedure of the Intergovernmental Committee, which will meet in May 2019.

IV. Legal and practical tools

11. The legal and practical tools developed by UNESCO and its partners to facilitate and improve the implementation and raise awareness of the 1970 Convention and the Intergovernmental Committee have focused particularly on capacity-building activities and workshops.

UNESCO Database of National Cultural Heritage Laws

12. The database currently contains 2,914 national cultural heritage normative instruments from 189 countries. According to statistics, the page generates on average 4,700 hits and a set of 813,000 prints per month. The Secretariat has recently also developed a new brochure, dedicated to the database, that is available in the six official languages of UNESCO. However, additional support is needed to ensure the sustainability of the database.

ArThemis database on the resolution of disputes involving cultural heritage

13. In March 2018, UNESCO signed a partnership agreement with the Art Law Centre at the University of Geneva for the development of the ArThemis database, which will gather records of case studies of return and restitution that have been solved without litigation. The ArThemis database will be openly available to the public.

Web alerts in the event of theft of cultural property

14. UNESCO receives regular requests from States to publish international online alerts on stolen cultural property and to thereby contribute to international awareness-raising and cooperation efforts to facilitate the restitution of objects through "theft alerts". These alerts are communicated to partners and other member States and published on the 1970 Convention website. Additionally, UNESCO immediately alerts the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and other relevant specialized police units, customs and main art market operators.

15. From September 2015 to May 2018, UNESCO received 23 alerts from Greece, 6 alerts from Bolivia, 4 alerts from Peru, 3 alerts from Ecuador, 1 alert from Burkina Faso, 1 alert from Chile and 1 alert from the Syrian Arab Republic, bringing the total number of thefts reported on the 1970 Convention website to 39.

V. Awareness-raising activities

Campaigns to combat the illicit trafficking of cultural property

16. UNESCO joined efforts with the tourism industry to raise awareness among travellers and the general public of the importance of sustainable tourism and the need to protect cultural heritage. In November 2015, the travel company Lonely Planet France[6] published a text on its website warning tourists about the risks of illicit trafficking in cultural property. An article was included in hardcopy versions of the travel guides of countries where movable cultural property is particularly at risk.

17. UNESCO has produced 13 awareness-raising video clips, featuring different countries and regions across the world, including East Africa, West Africa, Asia, South-East Asia, Europe and the Caribbean, on the fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property, to be broadcast on the UNESCO website. Several of the video clips have been disseminated in airports and travel hubs around the world.

18. In follow-up to the campaign carried out in conjunction with the Comité Colbert, UNESCO launched a new joint campaign in July 2016, on social networks and in public spaces in Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia, Spain, to raise awareness on the value of heritage and creativity. Given the popularity of the campaign, and in consultation with the Comité Colbert, the initiative has also been carried out in Argentina, and work on developing the initiative for Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America, Africa and Arab States is in progress.

19. Within the framework of the agreement with the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation signed in May 2015,[7] UNESCO started an awareness-raising campaign in the national museums in Berlin, including the Pergamon Museum, concerning the fight against the illicit trade of artefacts from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. The campaign focuses on the dissemination of awareness-raising materials for the public.

20. The University Twinning and networking scheme of experts and expert institutions on the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property was established.

Regional campaigns to combat the illicit trafficking of cultural property

21. A regional awareness-raising campaign, funded by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, was undertaken in Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. In addition to the production of communication media (posters, postcards and stickers), an awareness-raising video dedicated to the fight against trafficking in the Maghreb region was produced for local communities. For children, several cartoons on heritage were also published and adapted to each of the four countries.

22. A project funded by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, which includes a comprehensive public awareness-raising campaign[8] and the production and distribution of materials through various media (audiovisual, radio and press), is currently being implemented in Central America. A number of seminars are also being conducted in universities to raise awareness of students on the issue of trafficking of cultural property.

Educational and youth-related activities

23. With a view to promoting the integration of the topic into formal and non-formal education, the Secretariat has produced toolkits for students and teachers such as the

[6] See www.lonelyplanet.fr/article/nemportez-pas-le-patrimoine-des-autres-dans-vos-bagages-1.

[7] See www.preussischer-kulturbesitz.de/en.html.

[8] See www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVsvG0R0IX4.

"Cultural heritage in a box" toolkit in Mongolia.[9] This toolkit included specimens of cultural objects, images, games and multimedia materials to educate children on cultural heritage in an interactive, educational and entertaining way, as well as guidelines for teachers that included historical and cultural information on selected themes.

24. To highlight the successful restitution of looted artefacts to Iraq, the UNESCO Baghdad office, in close cooperation with the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage of Iraq and the National Museum of Iraq developed a series of communication materials, including posters, postcard and leaflets. The materials feature iconic cultural objects that were stolen and returned to Iraq and underline the significance of each piece and the conditions of its restitution. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway funded that activity.

25. The UNESCO Baghdad office also produced television clips that garnered a wide response from the Iraqi community. The content of the video clips was also produced in comic book form in Arabic to engage youth on the importance of protecting heritage and preventing illicit trafficking.[10]

26. In order to raise awareness among children in Iraq about the importance of cultural heritage protection and the need to counter illicit trafficking in cultural property, two mobile application games based on the character "Sarmad the Adventurer" were developed with financial support from Norway and Switzerland. The games were created in Arabic and English and are being disseminated in Iraqi primary schools. A first "Cultural Heritage Play Day" was organized at the Harsham internally displaced person camp in Erbil on 24 November 2016, where the game was distributed to the pupils. Two hundred primary school children participated in the play day. The programme included the screening of one of the video clips, followed by an interactive discussion with the children on their heritage, what it means to them and how they can stand up for its protection.

27. In recognition that armed conflict increases the risk of theft and trafficking, a new video clip was produced in May 2017 by the UNESCO office in Beirut, within the framework of the Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage project, funded by the European Union. It was launched in airports, travel agencies and museums.[11]

Unite4Heritage campaign

28. The Director-General of UNESCO launched the Unite4Heritage campaign[12] in March 2015 at the University of Baghdad, Iraq, to celebrate and safeguard cultural heritage and diversity around the world and to raise awareness among young people of the value of cultural heritage and the need to protect it.[13]

29. Thanks to the contribution of the Norwegian Government, communication materials about the importance of safeguarding the cultural heritage of Iraq were produced and disseminated, and a four-minute video highlighting the country's cultural diversity and heritage were posted online.[14]

30. An exhibition entitled "Palmira en Villa Ocampo", was opened on 27 April 2016 in Villa Ocampo, Argentina, to raise awareness in Latin America on the deliberate

[9] UNESCO, "Cultural heritage in a box", available at www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/publications/cultural-heritage-in-a-box-mongolia/.

[10] See www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=tU6mLmBeHW4.

[11] See www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-WDjZvvyD4&t=26s.

[12] See www.youtube.com/watch?v=tatlk9hQAZo.

[13] See www.unite4heritage.org/.

[14] See www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGZ241XBIDY.

destruction of cultural heritage in the Syrian Arab Republic, using the emblematic example of Palmyra.[15]

31. Two concerts were organized by the International Philharmonic Choir in Paris on 8 and 16 June 2016, and communication materials[16] were disseminated.

32. An international campaign, entitled "Yemeni Heritage Week — Museums United for Yemen", was organized by the UNESCO office in Doha from 24 to 30 April 2016. The objective was to raise awareness among the public at large about the wealth of cultural heritage in Yemen that is at risk due to conflict.

33. A Unite4Heritage workshop was held on 17 May 2016 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, to raise awareness among museum professionals from Uzbekistan of the fight against the illicit trafficking in cultural property.

34. A video clip entitled "Have you ever heard of blood antiquities?" was produced in cooperation with the Association for Research into Crimes against Art, as part of the Unite4Heritage campaign in support of the workshop held in April 2018 in Beirut to counter the illicit trafficking of antiquities in the Mashreq.[17]

VI. Training

35. UNESCO has continued to undertake extensive training and capacity-building programmes in all regions of the world, in particular Eastern and Southern Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia.[18] Further details on these activities are integrated throughout the remainder of the present report.

VII. International cooperation

Cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

36. UNESCO cooperation has increased even further with partners such as International Institute for the Unification of Private Law, INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Council of Museums. Those strong partnerships are based on the complementarity of activities and expertise within the field of illicit trafficking of cultural property and are key to promoting the restitution of stolen and/or illicitly exported cultural property, capacity-building, recovery and reconstruction, and assessment and monitoring of information. They have helped strengthen and facilitate the creation of national and regional networks among law enforcement agencies, which in turn has ensured better implementation of the 1970 Convention and an overall better participation of relevant stakeholders in all activities and initiatives related to the illicit trafficking of cultural property.

37. On 1 June 2018, UNESCO held an international conference on the theme "Circulation of cultural property and shared heritage" at UNESCO headquarters. The high-level meeting included a panel of ministers from Benin, France, Gabon, Germany, Jordan, Lebanon, Peru and Senegal in charge of cultural heritage and

[15] UNESCO, "The lion of Al-side Palmyra (Syrian Arab Republic) in the heart of villa Ocampo", available at www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/the_lion_of_al_side_palmyra_syria_in_the_heart_of_villa_oc/.

[16] Chœur et Orchestre Philharmonique International, "le Requiem de Dvořák, 8 et 16 juin 2016!", 28 Janvier 2016. Available at www.lechoeurcpi.fr/actualites/le-requiem-de-dvorak/.

[17] See www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZxeUN_B8AgA.

[18] UNESCO, "Capacity-building and workshops", available at www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/capacity-building/.

featured three round tables at which new forms of cooperation, ethical considerations and the role of museums concerning the circulation of cultural property were discussed. The conference provided a key platform for decision makers and cultural professionals to renew the debate on shared heritage and build critical momentum for the future. Participants called on UNESCO to continue to play the role of facilitator in the process of returning cultural property to countries of origin.

Cooperation with the European Union

38. UNESCO organized, on 9 and 10 June 2016, in partnership with the European Union and with the support of the government of Flanders, a high-level meeting and technical conference in Brussels to underline the links between culture and international security and promote its integration in relevant policies.[19] The high-level event underlined the importance of culture in the lives of individuals affected by conflict and humanitarian crises and supported the development of policies and activities to better take into account culture and its potential in the work of the humanitarian and security sectors.

39. In March 2017, UNESCO launched, in cooperation with the European Union, the implementation of a two-year project entitled "Engaging the European art market in the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property".[20] The project is aimed at engaging European art market stakeholders in the fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property, with a particular focus on — but not restricted to — items originating from countries in a conflict situation or affected by natural disasters. In addition, it is expected that the project will strengthen the exercise of due diligence in European art commercial transactions while making the stakeholders concerned aware of the various implications of the illicit trafficking in cultural property. It is also expected to enhance the capacities of the 28 member States of the European Union to efficiently protect their cultural heritage both inside and outside their borders. One of the outcomes of this project will be the development of a massive online open course.

40. UNESCO is implementing a project funded by the European Union, entitled "Training magistrates and police forces of the European Union in the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property". The purpose is to enhance participants' knowledge of the main international instruments and tools and to strengthen the capacities of member States to protect cultural heritage inside and outside community borders.

41. UNESCO and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law are also cooperating closely with the European institutions in an advisory capacity on the preparation of a project on import certificates on cultural property for the European Union.

Cooperation with the art market

42. UNESCO continues to foster constructive and active cooperation with key stakeholders in the art market regarding the fight against illicit trafficking and in particular the implementation of due diligence requirements. In October 2015, UNESCO launched, together with the Conseil des ventes volontaires, a joint initiative to enhance the vigilance of the art market regarding the provenance of cultural

[19] See UNESCO, "Cultural diversity under attack: protecting heritage for peace", available at https://en.unesco.org/cultural-diversity-under-attack-2016.

[20] UNESCO, "Engaging the European art market in the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property", available at www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/partnerships/european-union/due-diligence-in-the-art-market/.

property, with particular attention to archaeological artefacts originating from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.[21]

43. On 30 March 2016, UNESCO, in partnership with the Conseil des ventes volontaires, organized a one-day round table focused on the art market and its important role in the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property, entitled "The movement of cultural property in 2016: regulation, international cooperation and professional diligence for the protection of cultural heritage". Art market stakeholders, including representatives of auction houses and online platforms, museum representatives, cultural heritage experts, specialized intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and member States participated in the conference, which took place at UNESCO headquarters, in Paris.

44. On 30 November 2017, UNESCO took part in an event organized by the "Marché de l'art" association of the École du Louvre, in France, to introduce to academics the international legal framework governing the protection of cultural property and the duties of art market professionals in terms of ascertaining the origin of cultural property items in commercial transactions.[22]

45. UNESCO took part in an event on the theme "Transparency and information" at the European Fine Art Fair, held on 7 March 2018 in Maastricht, the Netherlands, to examine issues regarding the verification of the origin of artefacts, the evolution of the concept of due diligence and the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural objects.

VIII. Emergency activities

Security Council resolutions

46. Following the adoption of Security Council resolution 2199 (2015), the Director-General of UNESCO organized a restricted high-level meeting at Paris headquarters on 1 April 2015. The goal of the meeting was to strengthen coordination mechanisms between UNESCO and its partners and to map out the effective implementation of resolution 2199 (2015) with a view to countering more effectively the illicit trade of Iraqi and Syrian cultural heritage.

47. With the involvement of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team of the Security Council, INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law, UNODC, the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, the International Council of Museums, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and the International Council on Archives, a timeline and road map were agreed upon for international actions among these partners focused on coordination mechanisms for information-sharing and joint actions, as well as the establishment of a network with focal points from each organization to facilitate information exchange and expedite responses to emergency situations. A set of guidelines for States to take effective national measures for the implementation of resolution 2199 (2015) was also agreed upon.

48. On 5 May 2015, the Director-General of UNESCO sent all member States the above-mentioned set of indicative guidelines for the effective implementation of paragraph 17 of resolution 2199 (2015) at the national level and called on them to

[21] See www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/MESSAGE_UNESCOCVV_FINAL.pdf.

[22] See www.youtube.com/watch?v=c79d-C_c3GE&t=6s.

inform UNESCO on the measures implemented at the national level to comply with resolution 2199 (2015).[23]

49. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2199 (2015), UNESCO shared information on actions undertaken by Member States regarding the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution with the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, together with recommendations, which included a series of counter-measures to be implemented by Member States to mitigate the financing of terrorism through trafficking of cultural property. The Director-General of UNESCO informed member States of these recommendations on 11 January 2016[24] and called on them to report to UNESCO any information on the artefacts seized within their respective territories originating from Iraq and/or the Syrian Arab Republic.

50. To ensure the effective implementation of resolution 2199 (2015) at the international level, the Director-General convened, on 26 January 2016, a videoconference with the heads of INTERPOL, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law, UNODC and the World Customs Organization. UNODC undertook a similar initiative on 23 May 2016 at its headquarters in Vienna. A third videoconference with the above-mentioned partners and the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team was organized on 22 March 2017 to continue the follow-up of the implementation of Security Council resolutions to fight against illicit trafficking in conflict areas and develop future joint actions.

51. In April 2016, the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, with the support of UNESCO, published two documents related to the implementation of resolution 2199 (2015). The report of the Monitoring Team (S/2016/213) documents the main challenges encountered in the implementation of the resolution, including a detailed analysis of illicit trafficking of cultural artefacts. Document S/2016/210 includes the recommendations of the Monitoring Team to the Security Council for an effective follow-up at the international level.

52. The above-mentioned videoconferences also served as a follow-up to resolution 2253 (2015) (adopted in December 2015), which builds on resolution 2199 (2015), and highlighted, among other points, the importance of developing strong relations with the private sector in countering the financing of terrorism and the laundering of the proceeds from that crime, as well as strengthening due diligence processes.

53. In paragraph 15 of resolution 2253 (2015), the Security Council calls upon Member States to take the necessary measures to fulfil their obligation under paragraph 12 of resolution 2199 (2015) and to report interdictions related to "antiquities". The Director-General sent four circular letters to invite member States to strengthen information-sharing on measures adopted nationally in this regard.[25] The most recent letter, dated 18 May 2016, included a reporting tool developed by UNESCO in consultation with the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, which aims at gathering information on Iraqi, Libyan, Syrian and Yemeni artefacts seized to facilitate their eventual safe return to their countries of origin, in the spirit of paragraph 17 of resolution 2199 (2015).

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[23] UNESCO, Circular letter 4115 on United Nations Security Council resolution 2199 (2015), 5 May 2015. Available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002329/232934E.pdf.

[24] UNESCO, Circular letter 4144 on United Nations Security Council resolution 2199 (2015), 11 January 2016. Available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002432/243249e.pdf.

[25] UNESCO, Circular letters 4100 (6 March 2015), 4115 (5 May 2015), 4144 (11 January 2016), 4156 (18 May 2016) on United Nations Security Council resolution 2199 (2015), available at http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002321/232164e.pdf, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002329/232934e.pdf, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002432/243249e.pdf and http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002448/244857e.pdf, respectively.

54. Building on the information contained in the UNESCO report on the implementation of resolution 2199 (2015), the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted on 13 January 2017 its recommendations to the Security Council. The recommendations, while highlighting the strong cooperation between the Monitoring Team and UNESCO, underlines the importance for UNESCO member States to share information on their national activities to implement the Security Council resolutions (see S/2017/35). The main issues referred to in the report include seized artefacts, fake artefacts, number of criminal cases, measures adopted by Member States, smuggling routes and proposals for strengthening the implementation of resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015).

55. On 24 March 2017, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2347 (2017) on the protection of cultural heritage in the event of an armed conflict and stressed in this regard the central role of UNESCO, UNODC and INTERPOL in preventing and countering the illicit trafficking of cultural property. In the resolution, the Council encourages bilateral, regional and international cooperation, specifically in crime prevention and criminal justice responses, including through investigation, cross-border cooperation and exchange of information, as well as the inclusion of the protection of cultural heritage in the mandate of United Nations peacekeeping operations, as appropriate. Moreover, it encourages Member States to consider the adoption of a series of measures with a view to preventing the illicit trafficking of cultural property in the event of armed conflict.

56. In response to the adoption of the above-mentioned resolution, the Director-General of UNESCO wrote to member States on 9 June 2017, requesting them to submit their reports on actions taken nationally to implement the provisions of resolution 2347 (2017).

57. Building on the information contained in the 32 reports transmitted by Member States, UNESCO coordinated the drafting of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2347 (2017) (see S/2017/969) in cooperation with the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team and UNODC. The report focuses on activities undertaken by Member States as well as INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law and the International Council of Museums to counter the illicit trafficking of cultural property as part of the implementation of resolution 2347 (2017) at the national and international levels.

58. The Secretary-General submitted the report to the Security Council on 30 November 2017. The Director-General of UNESCO also addressed the Council concerning the report, reaffirming the determination of UNESCO to implement the resolution, in cooperation with its partners, and building on the important role of culture and heritage for dialogue and reconciliation in peacebuilding processes.

Emergency actions in conflict zones

59. In addition to its follow-up activities to the relevant Security Council resolutions, UNESCO continues to implement numerous emergency actions, notably in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Mali, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen — countries that require specific responses to effectively fight against the illicit trafficking of their cultural property.

60. Following the adoption of the Strategy for Reinforcing UNESCO Actions for the Protection of Culture and the Promotion of Cultural Pluralism in the Event of an Armed Conflict[26] at the thirty-eighth session of the General Conference of UNESCO, in November 2015, UNESCO held a series of capacity-building workshops, in

[26] See https://en.unesco.org/system/files/unesco_clt_strategy_en.pdf.

cooperation with, among others, INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, UNODC and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law. The objective was to train cultural heritage professionals, law enforcement authorities and custom officers from the countries affected by conflict situations and from neighbouring countries.[27]

61. In September 2015, the initiative entitled "Protecting cultural heritage — an imperative for humanity: acting together against the destruction and trafficking of cultural property by terrorist groups and organized crime", was organized by the Permanent Missions of Italy and Jordan to the United Nations, with the support of UNESCO, INTERPOL and UNODC. A ministerial meeting introduced the initiative, recalling the existing international instruments, including the relevant UNESCO conventions, and underlining the need to make them more effective.

62. In 2016, as a follow-up to the ministerial meeting, the following three expert meetings were co-organized by the Permanent Missions of Italy and Jordan to the United Nations, together with UNESCO, INTERPOL and UNODC:

- 2 March 2016:[28] "The market and the import/destination of illegaily trafficked cultural property"
- 28 April 2016: [29] "Trafficking and transfer of illegally exported cultural property"
- 27 May 2016:[30] "Destruction of cultural heritage and trafficking and illicit transfer of cultural property — source countries"

63. The outcomes of the meetings included: recommendations on exercising due diligence in the search for the provenance of cultural objects; strengthening border controls; training police and customs; raising awareness among local communities and the art market; and adopting administrative sanctions and preventive measures in the fight against trafficking of cultural property.

64. As a concluding event of this series of initiatives, on 22 September 2016, a high-level meeting was organized in the context of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly. It resulted in a renewed commitment by the international community to sharing responsibility and scaling up responses to counter attacks against culture by combining efforts to protect cultural heritage and education for human rights.

65. INTERPOL, in collaboration with UNESCO, organized a two-day meeting on preventing the circulation and sale of illegally exported Iraqi and Syrian artefacts on the international market and restitution of these artefacts. The meeting was held at the UNESCO Office in Beirut on 14 and 15 December 2016, with the support of the Norwegian Embassy. The aim of the conference was to assess the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2199 one year after its adoption.

66. On 30 and 31 March 2017, the Director-General of UNESCO participated in the Group of Seven (G7) ministers of culture meeting, organized in Florence, Italy, on

[27] See www.unesco.org/new/en/safeguarding-syrian-cultural-heritage/ and www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/emergency-actions/iraq/.

[28] UNESCO, "Addressing the illicit trafficking of cultural property at the end of the market chain", available at www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/meetings/un-march-meeting/.

[29] UNESCO, "Curbing the illicit trafficking of cultural property: focusing on countries of transition and the application of criminal justice", available at www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/meetings/un-april-meeting/.

[30] UNESCO, "Experts propose prevention, preparedness in fight against unprecedented cultural destruction and illegal trafficking", available at www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/meetings/un-may-meeting/.

the theme "Culture as a tool for dialogue among peoples", dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage and the prevention of illicit trafficking. The goal of the conference was to bring global attention to the issue of culture as a driver for integration, peacebuilding and sustainable development. The representatives from the G7 countries reaffirmed in the declaration made in Florence [31] the importance of international cooperation and action to strengthen the safeguarding of cultural heritage, including, in this regard, the leadership role of UNESCO.

67. The UNESCO Regional Office in Beirut, INTERPOL and the embassy of Norway in Lebanon organized the second conference on the protection of cultural heritage in the Middle East,[32] on 5 and 6 December 2017 in Beirut. The conference's aim was to develop standard procedures for customs and police forces in the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property in the region, pursuant to the relevant provisions of Security Council resolutions 2199 (2015), 2253 (2015) and 2347 (2017).

68. UNESCO organized in Beirut, from 16 to 20 April 2018, a conference entitled "Countering antiquities trafficking in the Mashreq: training programme for specialists working to deter cultural property theft and the illicit trafficking of antiquities". The goal of the conference was to strengthen the capacities of law enforcement agencies in Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen to fight illicit trafficking in cultural property. The Heritage Emergency Fund of UNESCO funded the activity.

Heritage protection in Afghanistan

69. In Afghanistan, following an agreement between UNESCO and the Afghanistan Customs Department, UNESCO supported the Department both financially and technically through a capacity-building workshop on the prevention of illicit trafficking of antiquities and cultural objects for customs officers. This "training of trainers" programme lasted six weeks per year over a three-year period. As a result, six trained instructors of the Afghan National Customs Academy trained 750 customs officers from across Afghanistan.[33] The Academy continued this training throughout 2016 and 2017.[34]

70. A high-level enforcement meeting on integrated solutions for the protection of cultural heritage was organized at the University of Gibraltar, on 17 and 18 November 2016, by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Centre of Excellence in Gibraltar, in cooperation with the UNESCO office in Kabul. The aim of the meeting was to present a dedicated interface, called EPOCH, developed by UNCTAD and focused on the fight against the illicit trafficking in cultural property, to be integrated into the Afghanistan Customs Department risk-management system. The goal was also to discuss the involvement of UNESCO, INTERPOL, the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law and other international partners in the development of that innovative initiative, which could also be adapted in other countries (such as the Syrian Arab Republic) since the Afghanistan Customs Department risk-management system has already been implemented in over 90 states.

[31] See www.beniculturali.it/mibac/multimedia/MiBAC/documents/1490881204940_DECLARATION-Dichiarazione.pdf.

[32] See https://en.unesco.org/events/second-conference-protection-cultural-heritage-middle-east.

[33] The subject of "illicit traffic of antiquities" was officially added to the Afghan National Customs Academy curriculum. As a result, every customs officer in Afghanistan who goes through the mandatory training at the Academy will be trained on the fight against illicit trafficking of antiquities.

[34] UNESCO, "Afghan customs officers graduate from UNESCO training on the prevention of illicit trafficking of antiquities", 5 March 2014. Available at http://fr.unesco.org/node/184050.

Heritage protection in Iraq

71. UNESCO plays a critical role in Iraq, addressing emergency actions through two parallel activities: the protection of cultural heritage at heightened risk; and long-term recovery and conservation with a view to the sustainable management of cultural heritage.

72. The UNESCO Baghdad office conducted training workshops on risk assessment of museums and preventive conservation through the project entitled "Preventive conservation of Iraqi museum collections and cultural heritage sites at imminent risk", funded by Japan. Additionally, it was able to document damaged sites that had been under the occupation of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, through aerial photography and short-range drone surveys, notably in Mosul, Iraq.

73. UNESCO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture of Iraq, organized an international coordination conference on the safeguarding of cultural heritage in liberated areas of Iraq at UNESCO headquarters in Paris on 23 and 24 February 2017. The objective of the conference was to assess the overall situation of cultural heritage in the liberated areas, with a focus on historical buildings and urban heritage, archaeological sites, museums and museum collections, religious heritage, historical manuscripts and the identification of the measures required to counter the illicit trafficking of looted artefacts. Based on that assessment, a prioritized programme for action was agreed and a joint steering committee was established with the Iraqi authorities.

Heritage protection in Libya

74. An international expert meeting on the safeguarding of Libyan cultural heritage was organized in Tunis from 9 to 11 May 2016 by UNESCO and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property to ensure that international efforts for the support of Libyan professionals and cultural institutions are focused and effective. One of the working groups was dedicated to museums, collections and archives, with discussions on two issues: improvement of the physical state and security of museums; and the prevention of illicit trafficking. The outcomes of the discussions were reflected in an action plan for Libya.[35]

75. As a follow-up to the action plan, the UNESCO office in Cairo, in collaboration with the Libyan Department of Antiquities, studied the modalities to procure supplies to secure collections at risk in western and eastern Libya, specifically the collections held in the Sabratha, Cyrene and Leptis Magna sites and at the National Museum in Tripoli.

Heritage protection in Mali

76. In response to the conflict in Mali in 2012, and in order to fight the looting of West African cultural heritage, the International Council of Museums published a "Red list of West African cultural objects at risk", including a Mali "emergency" section.[36]

[35] UNESCO, "Expert meeting — safeguarding Libyan cultural heritage", available at www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/emergency-actions/libya/expert-meeting-2016/.

[36] International Council of Museums, "A red list of West African cultural objects at risk", 20 December 2016. Available at https://icom.museum/en/news/news/article/a-red-list-of-west-african-cultural-objects-at-risk/.

77. In November 2016, with the support of the Republic of Korea, school notebooks were disseminated to youth with the purpose of encouraging them to take ownership of their heritage and understand the importance of the protection of cultural property.

78. A capacity-building workshop took place in Timbuktu, Mali, in February 2017, in cooperation with the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the National Directorate of Cultural Heritage, which brought together 200 participants to strengthen actions to eradicate illicit trafficking of cultural property in northern Mali, particularly in Timbuktu, Gao and Kidal.

79. To strengthen the capacities of customs, police and gendarmerie, the UNESCO office in Bamako commissioned a research study, the results of which will be shared with all relevant national stakeholders in order to shed light on the prevention of the illicit trafficking of cultural objects. The UNESCO office in Bamako, in coordination with the UNESCO office in Dakar, organized a subregional workshop in July 2017 that brought together museum professionals, law enforcement and judiciary staff from Guinea, Mali, the Niger and Senegal. The project is aimed at strengthening the capacities of customs, police and military officers on illicit trafficking, in collaboration with INTERPOL.

Heritage protection in the Syrian Arab Republic

80. UNESCO has been closely involved in the protection of Syrian heritage since the beginning of the conflict in 2011. In August 2018, UNESCO completed a four-year programme on the emergency safeguarding of cultural heritage,[37] which has mobilized some 600 professionals.

81. In the framework of the Emergency Safeguarding of the Syrian Cultural Heritage project, funded by the European Union, several capacity-building workshops were held specifically for police, customs and legal personnel in the Syrian Arab Republic and in neighbouring countries. The workshops addressed the legal, procedural and operational components on the illicit trafficking of cultural property and return and restitution of cultural property.

82. In June 2016, with the participation of 230 Syrian and international experts, a two-day meeting was convened to assess damage to cultural heritage sites in the Syrian Arab Republic, develop methodologies and define priority emergency safeguarding measures for the country's heritage. This event was held in Berlin and organized by UNESCO and the German authorities. Participants also addressed the critical and persistent issue of looting and illicit trafficking of cultural heritage. They called for a comprehensive list of looted objects from the Syrian Arab Republic and appealed to all Governments to implement the relevant Security Council resolutions banning the trade in cultural heritage from the country.[38]

Heritage protection in Yemen

83. In July 2015, a two-day expert meeting was held at UNESCO headquarters and resulted in the launch of an Emergency Action Plan for the Safeguarding of Yemen's Cultural Heritage. The Plan responded to the continued threat that the ongoing conflict poses to the country's cultural heritage and focused on the following areas: communication and awareness-raising; knowledge management and information-sharing; and technical assistance, emergency preparedness and response mechanisms.

[37] See https://en.unesco.org/syrian-observatory/emergency-safeguarding-syrian-cultural-heritage-project.

[38] UNESCO, "Syrian and international experts agree on emergency measures to safeguard Syria's heritage", 4 June 2016. Available at www.unesco.org/new/en/media-services/single-view/news/syrian_and_international_experts_agree_on_emergency_measures/.

INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, the International Council of Museums and the International Council on Archives contributed to the illicit trafficking-related components of the plan.

84. As a follow-up to the Action Plan for Yemen, a workshop was organized by the UNESCO office in Doha, from 2 to 4 April 2017, bringing together museum and art market professionals from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates and governmental experts from Yemen. The purpose of the meeting was to raise awareness in the region, with a special focus on the prevention of illicit trafficking of Yemeni cultural property.

IX. Support from States parties

85. A number of States parties have provided financial contributions in various areas, including:

State	*Contributions*
China	Contribution to the fund of the 1970 Convention
Greece	Informal working groups to the Subsidiary Committee (Delphi, 2016; Crete, 2017)
Germany	• Meeting of experts on the safeguarding of Syrian cultural heritage (Berlin, 2016) • Support for the participation of experts from Africa to the international conference on the theme "Circulation of cultural property and shared heritage"
Indonesia	Subregional workshop on the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property and for the promotion of ratifications of the 1970 and UNIDROIT Conventions (Jakarta, 2016)
Italy	Training workshops on the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property in Eastern Europe (Albania, 2015; Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016; Montenegro and Serbia, 2017)
Spain	• National awareness-raising and national information workshop on illicit trafficking of cultural property (Er Rachidia, Morocco, 2016; Marrakech, Morocco, 2016; Tangier, 2016; Fes, 2016) • Regional meeting for the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property in Central America and the Dominican Republic (Antigua, Guatemala, 2016)
Sweden	Support to human resources of UNESCO
Monaco	Support to human resources of UNESCO
Norway	Awareness-raising activities for Iraq
Netherlands	Training workshop on the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property for Hanoi, Viet Nam

State	*Contributions*
Turkey	Support to human resources of UNESCO
United Arab Emirates	Workshop on the ethics of collections and the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property for the Gulf countries

X. Conclusion

86. Since 2015, threats to cultural heritage have continued to increase and have taken new forms. The illicit trafficking of cultural property is widely used as a source of financing for organized criminal groups and terrorist activities, as recognized by the Security Council, most notably in its resolution 2199 (2015). In response to this, UNESCO and its partners have stepped up efforts to protect cultural heritage in countries affected by conflict, including by promoting international cooperation to curb the illicit trafficking of cultural property. In this regard, efforts will be pursued to promote the universal ratification of the international normative instruments dedicated to the protection of cultural heritage and cultural property. Efforts will also be made to strengthen the capacities of key stakeholders on the return and restitution of cultural objects to their country of origin and to engage with the art market to ensure the application of due diligence principles and the regulation of online sales of cultural property and of free ports and free trade zones.

87. Member States are encouraged:

(a) To promote the universal ratification the 1970 Convention and the UNIDROIT Convention;

(b) To submit regularly their reports on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 2199 (2015) and 2347 (2017);

(c) To report any information regarding seizures of cultural property, especially those originating from a conflict zone;

(d) To put in place preventive measures for the protection of their cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of their neighbours;

(e) To intensify cooperation at the national, regional and international levels;

(f) To participate in capacity-building workshops to ensure the mobilization of relevant stakeholders, including government officials, police, and customs and museum professionals;

(g) To promote the implementation of educational and awareness-raising activities on the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property;

(h) To continue to forge relationships with the private sector, including the art market and the financial and trade sectors, to combat money laundering in the art market.

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Culture of peace

Promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 72/136, 72/137 and 72/17, by which the Secretary-General was requested to report on activities undertaken by relevant United Nations entities to promote a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue. As the lead agency for the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013–2022), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization has prepared the report, in cooperation with relevant United Nations entities, highlighting new trends and putting forward recommendations for action.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolutions 72/136, on the promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace, and 72/137, on the follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its seventy-third session, information on progress made by Member States and United Nations entities towards the implementation of the resolutions to promote a culture of peace. In contrast to previous reports under the item entitled "Culture of peace", the scope of the present report was expanded to also include resolution 72/17 on the effects of terrorist acts directed against religious sites on a culture of peace. This allows for the consideration of several key and often interrelated challenges that have emerged in recent years with respect to a culture of peace.

2. Actions to promote a culture of peace are being taken against a global backdrop of cultures living in closer proximity and conflict dynamics changing and becoming more complex. The speed and escalation of migration, population growth and new technologies are shaping a global landscape that is increasingly interconnected and interdependent. Coupled with the increased priority given to conflict prevention that has characterized recent peace efforts, recognition has been growing at the global level of the importance of both intercultural and interreligious dialogue. Dialogue has been underscored as both a standard and a tool for ensuring a culture of peace.

3. For almost two decades, the United Nations has been working towards a culture of peace based on respect for human rights, democracy and tolerance, the promotion of development, education for peace, the free flow of information and the wider participation of women. This common aspiration of humankind, inspired by mutual respect and a sincere attachment to non-violence, has steadily gained stronger international support alongside changes in the international landscape. The designation by the United Nations of the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000), the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001–2010), the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2010) and the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013–2022) is evidence of not only the pronounced need for peace but also the collective commitment and action required.

4. Concurrently, escalating threats to cultural diversity have emerged as a key component of societies and their development. Growing tensions among communities of different cultural backgrounds, religions and beliefs have often been accompanied by incitement to violence by people who, at times, have used culture as their justification. This has been brought to the forefront with the alarming rise in attacks on religious and cultural heritage sites as a form of cultural cleansing, which, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2347 (2017), can be considered a war crime. It further reflects the increasing interaction between culture, security and humanitarian activity. Resolutions 72/136 and 72/137, focused on intercultural dialogue and the proliferation of cultural diversity, are directly complemented by resolution 72/17, in which attacks on cultural diversity are considered. The present report is therefore submitted pursuant to those three resolutions.

5. The reporting period, from May 2017 to April 2018, was marked by several developments at the international level that had a bearing on the work of United Nations agencies, national ownership and the consolidated implementation of a culture of peace. Notably, the recent introduction of the new peace architecture provided new impetus for examining how peace is approached and coordinated within the United Nations. This was brought to the forefront in the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43), which built

upon the recent resolutions on the review of the peacebuilding architecture, General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016). Key United Nations entities concerned with the peace a..d security pillar have subsequently pursued greater cross-pillar engagement in favour of preventing conflict and building and sustaining peace.

6. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development continues to guide the international community in implementing a bold and integrated development framework. It underscores the mutually reinforcing relationship between peace and inclusive development. While peace is reflected across many Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 16, on promoting and building peaceful, just and inclusive societies, is in direct alignment with a culture of peace in meeting the social, economic and environmental needs of present and future generations. Similarly, Goal 16 recognizes the need to face issues that hamper the development of peaceful societies.

7. Echoing the strategic shift of recent years towards preventive peacebuilding, efforts to address violent extremism have focused on earlier intervention in the cycle of radicalization to violence. In the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, a clear association was made between the prevention of violent extremism and development, and Member States were encouraged to align development policies with the Sustainable Development Goals, many of which were highlighted as critical to addressing the push and pull factors of violent extremism and to enhancing community resilience. Dialogue has increasingly emerged as an instrument for addressing violent extremism, as illustrated in the framework to counter terrorist narratives proposed by the Counter-Terrorism Committee (see S/2017/375).

8. The International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013–2022), adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and endorsed by the General Assembly, has provided an overarching framework for activities carried out across the United Nations system in this area, and the core priorities of the action plan for the Decade provide the thematic structure of the present report. The contributions from a range of United Nations entities reflect a more diversified, multi-tiered approach to peacebuilding at the international, national and local levels and bring to light the work of some United Nations entities engaged in global peacebuilding whose work has previously been documented in less detail.

II. Promoting mutual understanding and reciprocal knowledge of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity

9. Diversity is a reality of the globalized world, and respect for cultural pluralism is at the heart of a culture of peace. Nevertheless, around the world, discrimination, inequalities and human rights violations continue to be fuelled by identity politics, exacerbating exclusion and social injustices and weakening the social fabric.

10. Human mobility has become a central issue of global development efforts, as evidenced by the commitment of Member States to developing a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and a global compact on refugees in 2018 (see General Assembly resolution 71/1). In 2015, the number of international migrants was estimated at about 244 million, 3.3 per cent of the global population. Migration has an impact on multiple economic, social and security aspects that affect the daily lives of a host of countries across the globe. In 2016, there were 40.3 million internally displaced persons and 22.5 million refugees worldwide, a scale unseen since the Second World War. Migration and refugee issues have increasingly been a focus of

the work of UNESCO in recent years, owing to their direct connection with rising discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. To improve public perceptions of migrants and refugees, UNESCO organized a global contest entitled "Opening hearts and minds for refugees", with the support of the Federal Research and Methodological Centre for Tolerance, Psychology and Education in the Russian Federation, in partnership with the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network, a global network of 11,000 educational institutions in 181 countries. The prize-winning creations by children were reproduced in *The Power of Solidarity*, published by UNESCO in 2017. Such initiatives foster social inclusion and respect for cultures in the early stages of life as a means of empowering and inspiring young people to be tolerant and engaged citizens. The migration issue is central to the contribution of UNESCO to the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in 2018.

11. Cities are often on the front lines of the migration issue, being prime destinations for internal and international migrants. As such, migration is a factor that continues to shape social, political, economic and cultural developments in cities. The UNESCO initiative on the theme "Welcoming cities for refugees: promoting inclusion and protecting rights", implemented together with the Marianna V. Vardinoyannis Foundation and the European branch of the International Coalition of Inclusive and Sustainable Cities, found that most of its 500 member cities have from 16 to 40 per cent foreign-born populations. Building upon the findings and recommendations of the *Cities Welcoming Refugees and Migrants* publication of 2016, UNESCO carried out targeted advocacy activities, including providing policy advice to the fourth global mayoral forum on human mobility, migration and development, held in Berlin in June 2017.

Attacks on cultural heritage

Attacks against monuments, sites and practices of cultural or religious significance have continued during the reporting period. In November 2017, in the first report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 2347 (2017) (S/2017/969), information was included on new measures implemented at the national and international levels, including strengthening the collaboration between the judiciary and police forces and training specialized personnel to protect cultural goods during armed conflict, curbing the illicit trafficking in cultural property and fighting violent extremism. As part of the efforts to support Member States in the implementation of Security Council resolution 2199 (2015), which includes legally binding measures to disrupt terrorist financing through the illicit trafficking of antiquities from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, UNESCO has intensified cooperation with other United Nations agencies, international partners and the art market sector.

UNESCO has continued to support Member States in their responses to complex emergency situations. The UNESCO Heritage Emergency Fund has proved to be an effective tool for the rapid deployment of urgent safeguarding interventions and the assessment of damage, as well as the delivery of capacity-building in response to damage caused by armed conflict worldwide, including in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

In November 2017, at the international high-level panel discussion on the theme "Responding to cultural cleansing, preventing violent extremism", panellists examined the challenges of heritage protection in times of conflict, the links between the protection and transmission of heritage and the fight against sectarian violence, as well as the importance of culture for healing communities recovering from conflict. In the margins of the event, a letter of intent formalizing and further enhancing collaboration between UNESCO and the International Criminal Court was signed.

Following the Court's ruling in August 2017, in which it delivered its first reparation order for the war crime of destruction of cultural property for the destruction of shrines and mausoleums in Timbuktu, Mali, in 2012, UNESCO initiated collaboration with the Court's trust fund for victims in order to contribute to bringing justice to the victims of these crimes.

In June 2018, UNESCO brought together high-level government representatives and experts for a major conference on the circulation of cultural property and shared heritage, including cooperation in the prevention of the illicit trafficking of cultural property.

During the International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, held in Kuwait City in February 2018, UNESCO launched, in close cooperation with the Government and the people of Iraq, in particular young women and men, a flagship initiative entitled "Revive the spirit of Mosul", a city that symbolizes the rich cultural diversity of the country. Building upon the recognition of culture and education as fundamental resources for promoting peacebuilding and community reconciliation for the sustainable reconstruction of the city, UNESCO will coordinate international efforts to revive the city's cultural and educational institutions, libraries and museums and to restore the urban heritage and architectural symbols that bring the Iraqi people together.

12. The global #Unite4Heritage campaign continued to garner support on social media for standing against intolerance and sectarianism by promoting and celebrating cultural diversity. In October 2017, the campaign launched a multilingual "social media newsroom" to engage online audiences about heritage topics, ranging from illicit trafficking to intangible cultural heritage. As part of this initiative, 16 short stories were produced and shared on UNESCO social media accounts in five languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Spanish). Since January 2017, the online presence of the campaign has been boosted on Twitter, with 3.46 million impressions on the #Unite4Heritage account and 6.45 million impressions on the UNESCO account.

13. As stated by the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights in her report to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/34/56), the arts are "among the best ways to fight fundamentalism and extremism. They are not luxuries, but critical to creating alternatives, making space for peaceful contestation and protecting youth from radicalization". Respect for human rights, in particular artistic freedom, encompassing freedom of expression, the right to create without intimidation, the right to freedom of movement and association and the right to participate in cultural life, is a core tenet of the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions of 2005. Among the objectives of the Convention is to encourage dialogue among cultures with a view to ensuring wider and balanced cultural exchanges in the world in favour of intercultural respect and a culture of peace. The *Reshaping Cultural Policies: Advancing Creativity for Development* global report of UNESCO of 2018, in which global implementation of the Convention was analysed, highlighted the fact that 430 attacks on artistic freedom by both governmental and non-governmental actors had been reported in 2016, more than four times the number of cases reported in 2014 (90). Artists continue to be targets of online harassment and physical violence when their work is perceived to challenge or criticize ideologies, beliefs and social preferences. Limiting artistic expression, therefore, directly undermines human rights and impedes the contribution of artists to promoting and sustaining peace. During the reporting period, UNESCO accelerated efforts to promote artistic freedom in line with its standard-setting

instruments, including by bringing together a range of stakeholders to strengthen partnerships for artistic freedom, developing and testing new awareness-raising and capacity-building tools and promoting artistic freedom in the digital age. Similarly, new guidelines adopted for the implementation of the 2005 Convention support stakeholders in applying a human rights-based approach to navigating the opportunities and challenges brought about by digital technologies.

14. Respect for cultural diversity is an integral part of the broader work of UNESCO to eliminate racism and racial discrimination. The Organization partnered with the Musée de l'Homme in Paris to organize the travelling exhibition entitled "Us and them — from prejudice to racism" from March 2017 to January 2018, as part of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March). The Youth Solidarity Fund of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations supported organizations led by young people in seven developing countries through grants of $25,000 and technical support for projects to promote cultural and religious diversity. These activities directly benefitted 11,166 people, of which 9,242 were young people, including 5,289 young women. Since 2014, UNESCO has been involved in a multidimensional intervention in Burkina Faso for the social inclusion of marginalized groups, including women accused of witchcraft. On the basis of dialogue sessions among stakeholders, actions are taken to promote inclusion and victim rehabilitation and to provide direct support for the economic empowerment of women.

15. UNESCO continued to strengthen its intercultural dialogue interventions to encourage a deeper knowledge of the diversity of Africa, combat stereotypes and prejudices and enhance the recognition of shared history, memory and heritage. To date, it has published eight volumes of the *General History of Africa* in 13 languages. As part of its continued work to broaden the reach of this series of books to younger generations, a nine-part television series based on the *General History of Africa* was shown on BBC World News throughout 2017, and three volumes were adapted for pedagogical use, with a focus on dealing with current challenges faced by Africans and their diasporas. These initiatives aim to advance knowledge of conflict, interethnic and interreligious tensions, poverty and underdevelopment in Africa and to rebut attempts to revise history for partisan purposes. Heritage, as an expression of cultural diversity, can play a crucial role in raising public awareness and educating young people in the commemoration of slavery and the slave trade, as well as in nurturing reconciliation and social cohesion. In 2018, as a contribution to the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024), UNESCO published *Legacies of Slavery: a Resource Book for Managers of Sites and Itineraries of Memory*, in which guidelines are provided on how best to preserve, promote and manage sites of memory, considering their sensitive and often painful connotations.

16. While intercultural dialogue is increasingly recognized for its instrumental role in building the conditions for peace and sustainable development, the dearth of available data undermines evidence-based policymaking and informed programming. The *UNESCO Survey on Intercultural Dialogue 2017* set out the findings of the first-ever survey among UNESCO member States to take stock of the current conceptual understanding of intercultural dialogue, as well as policies, legislation, available data, resources and main stakeholders in this field. The results provide an insight into country-specific policies on intercultural dialogue, offering a point of analysis for monitoring and policymaking, and underpin the impact and reach of the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013–2022). The survey served as the basis for the UNESCO global data project on intercultural dialogue, the aim of which is to understand both the impact of intercultural dialogue on key development and security priorities (including peacebuilding, conflict prevention and the promotion and protection of human rights) and the conditions needed to enable it to be effective

in achieving them. The project will also inform the Organization's future strategy on intercultural dialogue. The scoping study for the project, launched with the Institute for Economics and Peace in May 2018, will help to direct the conceptual and technical development of this ambitious, long-term project. Similarly, understanding the trends, gaps and opportunities in the use of digital resources in intercultural dialogue was the focus of a regional mapping process led by UNESCO, the results of which featured in *Diversity, Dialogue and Sharing*, published in 2017. In parallel, UNESCO unveiled its e-platform on intercultural dialogue to serve as an international hub for decision makers, institutions, non-governmental organizations, academia and the public and private sectors to promote good practices and to facilitate networking among different stakeholders working in the field of intercultural dialogue. Funded by the Government of Azerbaijan, the e-platform supports efforts in the prevention of violent extremism, the integration of migrants, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of young people by enhancing understanding among different religions, cultures, countries and peoples.

17. Across the United Nations system, there was a continued commitment to take forward the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism, focused on: (a) education, skills development and employment facilitation; (b) the empowerment of young people; (c) strategic communications, the Internet and social media; and (d) gender equality and the empowerment of women. UNESCO has placed emphasis on supporting the educational efforts of countries to build the resilience of young people to violent extremist messaging and foster a positive sense of identity and belonging through the acquisition of values, skills and behaviours that strengthen their commitment to non-violence and peace. On the basis of its guidance tools on preventing violent extremism through education, UNESCO has organized training for policymakers and teachers in East and West Africa, Central Asia, South-Eastern Europe and South Asia. In April 2018, the Organization held an inter-institutional consultation on education for preventing violent extremism at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, with the participation of more than 20 international actors working on the issue, including United Nations agencies, to strengthen coordination and global networking in the area of preventing violent extremism through education.

18. Young people are among the first to be affected by violent extremism and are often both victims and perpetrators of violent extremist acts. The Networks of Mediterranean Youth project, led by UNESCO and the European Union, contributes to preventing violent extremism by addressing issues that lead to disillusionment among young people and by ensuring that young people are part of decision-making and are heard in the media. UNESCO partnered with the European External Action Service during the high-level European Union conference on the theme "Promoting youth in peacebuilding", held in Brussels in May 2018, to organize two panel discussions on the engagement of young people in preventing violent extremism and peacebuilding. UNESCO also collaborated with the Human Security Collective, the United Network of Young Peacebuilders and the Permanent Missions of Canada and the Netherlands to the United Nations for the side event on a human security and youth leadership approach to preventing violent extremism at the United Nations High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, held in New York in June 2018. The "Prevention of violent extremism through youth empowerment in Jordan, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia" project was launched by UNESCO and the Office of Counter-Terrorism in April 2018. "Preventing violent extremism and strengthening social inclusion" was the theme of the second International Youth Conference on Volunteering and Dialogue, held at UNESCO headquarters in September 2017. The Conference was undertaken in collaboration with the United Nations Volunteers, the World Organization of the Scout Movement and the World Scout Foundation and funded by the King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz International Programme for a Culture of Peace and Dialogue, which was initiated by

he Government of Saudi Arabia. More than 100 young volunteers came together to discuss refugees and migration, intercultural education, the role of the media and social media in constructing positive dialogue and the engagement of young people with cultural heritage and the arts. The same conference saw the inauguration of the photo exhibition entitled "The power of empathy", featuring a selection of photographs and stories from more than 800 entries to a global youth contest. In 2017, UNESCO also published *Youth and Violent Extremism on Social Media: Mapping the Research*, providing a global mapping of research about the assumed roles played by social media in violent radicalization processes, especially when they affect young people and women across the world.

19. Viewing young people as vital contributors to solutions is necessary to harness their potential to become a transformative force in peacebuilding. Such an approach resonates in the work of the Whitaker Peace and Development Initiative, founded by the UNESCO Special Envoy for Peace and Reconciliation, Forest Whitaker, to empower young people to become peace leaders and agents of positive transformations. In May 2017, the Initiative's flagship programme, the Youth Peacemaker Network, was launched in the Acholi subregion, in the north of Uganda. With a view to supporting peacebuilding in South Sudan, a sports centre was established, in partnership with UNESCO and the One World Play Project, at the protection of civilians camp in Juba to leverage sport for a culture of peace and non-violence. UNESCO supported action led by media students of the Media and Journalism School, National University of Samoa, to raise public awareness of school-related gender-based violence. The students took part in a training workshop on school-related gender-based violence to deepen their understanding of the issue and to discuss possible future youth-led interventions. Subsequently, the trainees developed a series of media materials on gender-based violence in schools.

20. Terrorism and violent extremism affect women and girls in diverse ways, and they are often the first victims of violent extremist groups. Although women play key roles in preventing and countering violent extremism, their capacities to mentor, negotiate and mediate have largely remained untapped. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) is working with religious actors to build country and regional networks to promote cross-learning approaches to the early signs of radicalization, the disengagement and reintegration of former terrorists, the development of research and round-table discussions on female combatants and on the interpretation of religious texts. In Kenya, for example, implementing partners in the north-eastern and coastal counties have engaged with the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims and their religious leaders, young people and elders who are involved in the 10-member coordination committee for efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism in Wajir to raise awareness among community members.

Building an evidence base on the root causes of violent extremism

While much has been gained in learning about violent extremism, knowledge on the push and pull factors needs to be strengthened to build a solid evidence base for programming. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has applied this principle to its work on violent extremism by supporting action-oriented global and regional research projects that uncover the root causes of violent conflict. In September 2017, the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa released a study entitled *Journey to Extremism in Africa: Drivers, Incentives and the Tipping Point for Recruitment*, in which the sociological and ideological drivers for recruitment of violent extremists in the continent were identified through interviews with 495 former members of extremist groups. In March 2018, UNDP launched a research initiative on the gendered dimensions of disengagement, rehabilitation and reintegration, including the role of women in extremist settings as perpetrators, returnees and

peacebuilders. The initiative is based on interviews with more than 40 peacebuilders, researchers and policymakers, including members of civil society from more than 15 countries. In June 2017, UNDP began to develop a global report on the role of young people in preventing extremism, which collects the perspectives of young people, youth organizations and relevant practitioners in a broad range of countries and regions. In the report for 2018, the myriad ways in which young people are at the forefront of efforts to prevent violent extremism are highlighted, and lessons and recommendations on taking an approach to empower young people are offered for actors engaged in preventing violent extremism. A core finding is that effective approaches to prevention require active support for and investment in young people's development priorities, initiatives and participation in decision-making. These initiatives provide necessary insights into the complexities of modern violent conflict and inform a new generation of UNDP programming to promote a culture of peace.

III. Supporting reconciliation and peace efforts through dialogue

21. The shift towards conflict prevention in peacebuilding efforts is a key marker of the report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43). Firmly based on the shared responsibility of all stakeholders and aimed at ensuring greater coherence across the three pillars of the United Nations, namely, peace and security, human rights and development, it has provided a critically important framework for broader cooperation by which to move forward with peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

22. Following the report, United Nations entities continued to roll out activities in support of conflict prevention and the identification of its root causes. The high-level meeting on "Peacebuilding and sustaining peace" held in April 2018 sought to move the United Nations beyond conceptual debates towards tangible action. The meeting concluded with the adoption of parallel twin resolutions, General Assembly resolution 72/276 and Security Council resolution 2413 (2018), on the follow-up to the report, demonstrating a clear reaffirmation by Member States of their commitment to peacebuilding, and relevant United Nations bodies were assigned to take forward the recommendations of the report.

23. Notably, this involved the revitalization of the Peacebuilding Support Office, which, together with the Department of Political Affairs, will form the new Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs as of 1 January 2019, to serve as a "hinge" between the three pillars of the United Nations. To support this bridging role, the Peacebuilding Commission diversified its working methods, holding several country and region-specific meetings among intergovernmental organs and in support of dialogue and reconciliation. New initiatives were taken to enhance dialogue and reconciliation for Burkina Faso, Colombia, the Gambia, Solomon Islands and Sri Lanka. For example, at the request of the Government of Colombia, in November 2017, the Peacebuilding Support Office brought together key national and international stakeholders to discuss the peace process. Similarly, in 2017, the Commission convened several discussions on the Gambia, with a view to assisting the country at a time of critical transition, concerning the draft bill on the truth, reconciliation and reparations commission. Support for reconciliation through dialogue was a focus of several initiatives financed by the Peacebuilding Fund, such as one to assist the Government of Liberia by providing $10 million for continued human rights monitoring and multi-stakeholder dialogues to reduce concession-related conflicts in the build-up to elections by implementing its peacebuilding plan.

24. At the local level, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan facilitated peace initiatives, including 14 Afghan-led mediation and reconciliation initiatives implemented throughout 2017 at the provincial and district levels with stakeholders from 16 provinces. The Mission also provided technical and financial support to the "Mothers of peace" dialogue project in Afghanistan, which brought together 36 women from three provinces to address barriers to the participation of women in peace efforts. Throughout the year, female representatives established provincial-level committees to undertake activities related to peace and conflict resolution. The United Nations Global Compact continued to emphasize work at the local level by engaging the private sector in high-risk and conflict-affected areas of the world through developing tools and resources, convening dialogues and establishing partnerships.

25. Leveraging young people in peacebuilding emerged as a central focus of the efforts of the United Nations throughout the reporting period. *The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security* was presented to the Security Council in April 2018, in accordance with its resolution 2250 (2015) on youth and peace and security, in which the Secretary-General was requested to carry out a progress study on the positive contribution of young people to peace processes and conflict resolution. In its resolution 2419 (2018), the Security Council subsequently called for the role of youth to be increased in negotiating and implementing peace agreements and recommended that the Peacebuilding Commission include in its advice ways to engage young people in national efforts to build and sustain peace. The Division for Inclusive Social Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been working with United Nations country offices, relevant United Nations agencies and youth ministries of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo. This work is intended to strengthen participatory processes between the Governments and youth civil society through capacity-building workshops, open dialogues and national campaigns on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in schools, neighbourhoods, communities and villages. The aim of the project is to promote the revision and reformulation of national youth policies to better address current challenges and boost the role of young people as agents in building sustainable and peaceful societies.

26. While peace has long been an overarching ideal in the United Nations system, over time it has adapted to a continuously changing set of realities. In May 2018, UNESCO published *Long Walk of Peace: Towards a Culture of Prevention*, the product of a three-year UNESCO-led research project in collaboration with the Abat Oliba CEU University in Barcelona and 32 United Nations agencies. The publication tracks the progression of the peace agenda of the United Nations over the past seven decades, highlighting a range of challenges and transformative trends, and puts forward recommendations for sustaining peace. As underlined in the joint study of the United Nations and the World Bank *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*, prevention works, saves lives and is cost effective. The study also stresses the importance of inclusive approaches to preventing violent conflict and explores how development processes can better interact with diplomacy and mediation, security and other tools to prevent conflict from becoming violent.

Gender-responsive peacebuilding

The Peacebuilding Fund in Sierra Leone contributed to supporting women and young people in preparation for the country's elections. A total of $10 million was provided to Liberia to implement the country's peacebuilding plan to strengthen human rights monitoring and multi-stakeholder dialogues. The Peacebuilding Fund in Libya also financed the national reconciliation project, under which four local dialogues led to the signing of reconciliation agreements between tribes and communities formerly in conflict. This included a women-only dialogue held in Tripoli in November 2017.

UN-Women is working to expand the number of women mediators and the influence of women in peace processes through broadening regional networks, supported by monitoring and development. In Burundi, UN-Women continued to enhance a nationwide network of women mediators, comprising 516 women across 18 provinces. Since January 2016, the network has dealt with more than 14,000 conflicts related to political, land, domestic violence and youth issues. Support provided to the women's coalition in South Sudan, comprising 44 women's organizations, included a position paper and lobbying for the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan to embrace peace and increase the quota of women in parliament from 25 to 35 per cent. In South Sudan, the establishment of centres for the empowerment of women have provided safe spaces for women in conflict situations. To promote the mediation of local disputes and address gender-based violence, Liberian women adopted the concept of "peace huts", which are community-led peacebuilding groups. To date, 29 peace huts have been established. Similarly, the Mediterranean women mediators network, launched in October 2017, helped to identify women mediators and experts for the Commonwealth women mediators network, established in December 2017.

IV. Building a framework for commonly shared values to foster social cohesion

27. Dialogue and collaboration with faith-based actors and community leaders continued to be a common approach and an often critical component in United Nations efforts to strengthen community and institutional capacities for social cohesion. This included activities geared towards reconciling religion and human rights everywhere, addressing conflict resolution, promoting gender equality and strengthening the coexistence of refugees and host communities.

28. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) continued to implement the follow-up to the Beirut Declaration on Faith for Rights and its 18 commitments, a framework providing space for cross-disciplinary reflection and action on the mutually enriching connections between religions and human rights. In Rabat in December 2017, more than 100 States, national human rights institutions, regional organizations, religious authorities and faith-based civil society actors participated in an OHCHR symposium to discuss the implementation of the Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence. In May 2018, OHCHR engaged with and consulted young people in a regional workshop in Tunis on the role of youth faith actors in promoting human rights in the Middle East and North Africa. The "Churches' commitments to children" initiative was agreed upon as a result of the global partnership between the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Council of Churches and a broad consultative process including 235 experts. These commitments outline specific actions and strategies in response to pressing challenges concerning children, with a focus on ending violence against children, welcoming and supporting refugees and migrants, and addressing action to mitigate and prepare for climate change. In the Philippines, UNICEF built upon relationships with Islamic religious leaders to develop nine sermons conducive to child protection, including on "peaceful jihad". Religious leaders of communities in conflict-affected areas have circulated these sermons throughout 2018.

29. At the global level, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continues to steward United Nations system collaboration around religion, development and peacebuilding through the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Engaging Faith-based Organizations for Development, which counts more than 17 United Nations entities as members. In March 2018, UNFPA was a sponsor of the Arab regional strategic learning exchange on religion, development and peacebuilding, involving 10 United Nations bodies and 60 faith-based and cultural partners. In April 2018, it coordinated a strategic planning retreat for the Sustainable Development Goals with 15 United Nations bodies and more than 40 partners from faith-based organizations, resulting in the endorsement of a faith-based advisory board for the Inter-Agency Task Force, to be launched at the General Assembly. UNFPA work in Djibouti, Egypt, Somalia and the Sudan focused on the abandonment of female genital mutilation and delinking it from religion. In Somaliland, for example, 400 male religious leaders and 100 female scholars were trained in the abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting, 300 advocacy sessions were given during Friday sermons at mosques, and female genital mutilation and Islam were the focuses of 10 radio programmes and 15 television episodes broadcast nationwide.

30. Nurturing dialogue between refugees and host communities formed part of the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to strengthen inclusion and coexistence. In Cameroon, UNHCR organized 55 projects on peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities, including educational talks on cultural values and peaceful coexistence, a craft fair for refugees and host community members, intercommunity dialogues and training of refugee community leaders and members of host communities. About 78,077 participants benefitted from increased social interaction in communities and the identification of pathways for conflict prevention. In Turkey, UNHCR created a task force to coordinate social cohesion efforts across the country. Engaging local community leaders, such as imams, mukhtars and school managers, has greatly helped in the mediation of tensions between refugees and host communities. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations has been working to foster better relations between refugees and host communities through the provision of training on agricultural skills in Turkey. As part of the training, participants connect with local employers through job fairs, thereby increasing their employment opportunities and integration in the community.

V. Disseminating the principles and tools of intercultural and interreligious dialogue through quality education and the media

31. Cultural diversity and interculturality have become realities of modern life for many people across the world. Equipping people with the relevant skills and tools has become paramount. Reflecting the rise and breadth of digital expansion, several United Nations bodies took up, during the reporting period, new technologies to diversify programming and broaden programme beneficiaries. While new media and digital technologies have opened new opportunities for dialogue, democratic participation, learning, creative expression and the sharing of platforms, they have also provided spaces for insecurity, hate speech, xenophobia and racism.

32. Following the positive reception of the Intercultural Competences: Conceptual and Operational Framework, issued by UNESCO in 2013, the Organization has worked with a leading expert from Duke University in the United States of America to create a globally accessible and adaptable activity based on story-telling. The aim of this collaboration was to develop core intercultural competences, such as empathy,

reflexivity and listening for understanding, among diverse audiences facing a wide range of issues. The UNESCO manual on intercultural competences based on human rights has been piloted in Thailand and Zimbabwe, in collaboration with UNFPA, the International Labour Organization, the city of Harare and numerous local non-governmental organizations. In Costa Rica, the manual was piloted in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Youth, the Office of the Ombudsperson, the National Human Rights Institution, the Office of the President on Indigenous Affairs and various non-governmental organizations. Further pilot sessions are planned in Austria and Tunisia in late 2018. Evaluations of the pilot sessions demonstrated that the majority of the more than 400 participants reported that they had acquired strong skills for empathy, reflexivity and listening for understanding.

33. In the progress report for 2017 of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, jointly coordinated by UNESCO and UNHCR, it was indicated that significant efforts had been made since 2015 in human rights education and training, whether or not as part of a strategy developed in the specific context of the World Programme. Human rights is also an underlying theme of the UNESCO "Writing peace" manual of 2017, aimed at raising awareness among children of diversity and the concept of peace. The first pilot workshop on the manual was held in Rabat in February 2018. The work of UNESCO in textbook development has continued to broaden to include considerations of the role of education in promoting human rights and ending discrimination. A four-year project (2013–2017) to produce quality textbooks with regard to religion, gender and culture was implemented through capacity-building workshops in Argentina, Germany, Morocco, Poland, Romania, South Africa and South Sudan, and "Making textbook content inclusive: a focus on religion, gender and culture" was published in 2017. The United Nations System Staff College, as a learning and capacity-development partner of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Engaging Faith-based Organizations for Development, has remained committed to engaging faith-based organizations in its educational activities and to providing education and knowledge management tools.

34. In Lebanon, the United Nations Volunteers partnered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to ensure that Palestinian children have access to education by employing more than 100 Palestinian refugees as national United Nations Volunteer teachers and tutors. This allowed more than 30,000 long-term Palestinian refugee children in Lebanon and more than 5,000 new Palestinian refugee children from the Syrian Arab Republic to be reached during the school years 2016/17 and 2017/18. Such initiatives have sought to ensure that all learners have equitable access to quality education and skills to build social cohesion.

35. As part of efforts to raise the topic of the prevention of violent extremism through education on the policy agenda and in the education system, UNESCO continued to produce guidance tools, including "A teacher's guide on the prevention of violent extremism", issued in 2016, in conjunction with capacity-building activities for teachers, teacher trainers and policymakers. Exclusionary, xenophobic and racist discourses and acts of violence have become a growing concern for global citizenship education, the aim of which is to equip learners with the skills, values and attitudes to build and sustain peaceful and just societies. A synthesis of discussions from the UNESCO seminar on nationalistic perspectives and their implications for global citizenship education, held in Seoul in June 2017, was produced in a booklet to provide a renewed understanding of the vision, skills and approaches needed to move forward in addressing these challenges. Under the Education for Justice initiative, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UNESCO are also promoting a culture of lawfulness through educational activities, including for the purposes of terrorism prevention.

36. New media and digital tools can be allies in promoting the democratic participation of civil society. The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations expanded the reach of its PEACEapp competition, launched in 2014, to raise awareness among refugees and host communities in Morocco and Spain of the potential of information and communications technology for intercultural and interreligious dialogue and mutual understanding. Following workshops held in Spain in 2017, the gamified app "SURVIVAL" was developed in collaboration with PEACEapp. It has since been downloaded more than 7,000 times. In May 2017, UNDP collaborated with Facebook to launch the #ExtremeLives campaign, a series of Facebook Live interviews that uncover the human face of extremism in Asia and show positive alternatives. The interviews profile individuals affected by extremism, including former fighters, victims, wives and mothers of jihadists and peacebuilders. To date, the series has reached 12 million Facebook users. OHCHR also harnessed new media to deliver two interactive e-learning modules on operationalizing the right to development in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in collaboration with the University for Peace, Costa Rica, mandated by the United Nations, and the United Nations University International Institute for Global Health, Malaysia.

37. As part of a series of international conferences addressing Internet radicalization and violence in cyberspace, UNESCO organized a meeting on "Darknet: the new societal, legal, technological and ethical challenges" in September 2017, which explored the technical and legal implications of cyberthreats and ways to improve national strategies. The Global Cybersecurity Index of the International Telecommunication Union measures the efforts of countries in addressing cybersecurity. In 2017, 134 countries responded to the survey for the Index, a 28 per cent increase from 2014, demonstrating the strengthened commitment of countries to join together in raising the level of cybersecurity worldwide.

38. Similarly, during the reporting period, it was apparent that civil society is increasingly engaging with social media to have concrete discussions on some of the negative dimensions of the Internet, such as hate speech. Two symposiums on the topic of hate speech against migrants and refugees in the media organized by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in Brussels and Cairo in 2017, for instance, received a large following on Twitter. The Brussels symposium reached more than 13 million Twitter accounts, with nearly 30 million impressions, while the Cairo symposium reached close to 2 million accounts, with 11 million impressions.

39. Navigating the current media landscape requires the ability to critically evaluate, as well as to responsibly use and contribute to, media content. The UNESCO social media strategy "Media and information literacy: critical thinking, creativity, literacy, intercultural, citizenship, knowledge and sustainability" supports close to 5,000 young people in acquiring competencies in media and information literacy and intercultural dialogue. During the reporting period, more than 300 young people were trained in the first international massive open online course on media and information literacy and intercultural skills, and more than 100 resources were added to the multimedia intercultural teaching resources tool through the UNESCO and United Nations Alliance of Civilizations online clearing house for media and information literacy.

40. A free press (print media, broadcast media and the Internet) is a cornerstone of a democratic society. UNESCO supports freedom of expression and independent and professional journalism. In March 2017, UNESCO issued the publication *Terrorism and the Media: a Handbook for Journalists* to encourage reflection on the ethical and journalistic challenges regarding terrorism, as well as issues on the safety of journalists, such as kidnappings and trauma. Over the past decade alone, more than 600 journalists and media professionals have been killed, mostly in non-conflict situations. UNESCO has taken the lead in the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, endorsed in April 2012.

VI. Fostering dialogue for protecting the planet and its ethical, religious, social and cultural dimensions

41. As peace and development are mutually dependent, the promotion of a culture of peace and intercultural and interreligious dialogue is integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In the reporting period, it was demonstrated that United Nations bodies are increasingly using dialogue for environmental development.

42. Building dialogue can be a critical factor in addressing conflict over natural resources. Promoting shared management of the transboundary natural resources in the Lake Chad Basin region is central to the ongoing Biosphere and Heritage of Lake Chad project, jointly implemented by two UNESCO programmes, the International Hydrological Programme and the Programme on Man and the Biosphere. The aim of the project is to strengthen the capacity of member States of the Lake Chad Basin Commission to safeguard and sustainably manage hydrological, biological and cultural resources through establishing a transboundary biosphere reserve, thereby reducing poverty and promoting a green economy and peace. A strategic action programme for the Dinaric Karst aquifers in South-Eastern Europe that aims to improve transboundary groundwater governance and the sustainability of related ecosystems was endorsed by the Governments of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro and is to be implemented by UNESCO from 2019 to 2024. To better engage women in peacebuilding processes relating to the management of natural resources, UN-Women, the United Nations Environment Programme, UNDP and the Peacebuilding Support Office are piloting a joint programme on women, natural resources and peace in Colombia and Northern Kordofan, the Sudan. The pilot project is aimed at testing different strategies to strengthen national capacities and support structures to ensure that women's skills are used and their potential is realized. The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations continued to implement the Dimitra clubs, a flagship community-driven approach to enhance rural people's empowerment and social cohesion for improved resilience, food security and nutrition. The approach is increasingly being used in protracted crises, with some 1,000 new Dimitra clubs created in 2018 in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali and the Niger to promote peace and tackle gender-based violence.

43. The impact of climate change can undermine a culture of peace by affecting safety and livelihoods and triggering conflict and displacement. For example, in their contributions to the Paris Agreement, more than 40 countries connected security and climate change, including through large-scale migrations, security challenges and conflict over scarce resources. The national adaptation plans under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change are a guide for Governments for analysing climate risks, identifying and implementing adaptation actions and integrating adaptation into national planning. By March 2018, more than 80 countries had launched their national adaptation plans and more than 35 countries had requested support from the Green Climate Fund. The United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability has been promoting a biocultural diversity approach to advance the more integrated and sustainable use of biological and cultural resources. Since 2016, it has been working to implement the Ishikawa Declaration on Biocultural Diversity.

Involving faith-based actors in environmental protection

Faith-based actors are increasingly important partners in environmental protection. To strengthen its work on the environmental dimensions of peace and conflict, the United Nations Environment Programme created a new Nairobi-based unit on environmental security. This unit will lead the Programme's work on harnessing environmental cooperation for peacebuilding and sustaining peace through, inter alia, interreligious and intercultural dialogue, as well as technical support to countries experiencing conflict and fragility associated with environmental degradation and climate change. During the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, in December 2017, representatives of 10 faiths from 40 organizations were brought together to discuss environmental priorities and agree upon new areas of collaboration.

VII. Conclusions

44. During the reporting period, the sharper focus on preventing and sustaining peace resonated throughout actions across the United Nations system. The report of the Secretary-General on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43) was firmly anchored in the shared responsibility of all stakeholders and targeted greater coherence across the three pillars of the United Nations. It has propelled a critically important framework for peacebuilding and sustaining peace, underpinned by commonly shared values for fostering social cohesion.

45. The reconfiguring of peacebuilding from a post-conflict context to one of preventive diplomacy has meant that cross-pillar engagement has become paramount. The focus on prevention has also opened the way for a wider range of actors, such as women and young people, to contribute to peacebuilding processes. Shifting the focus from response to prevention and identifying the root causes of conflict has similarly enabled more interdisciplinary and fine-grained approaches. The new thrust in peacebuilding efforts has opened up greater space for intercultural and interreligious dialogue and carved a more central and critical role for its contribution to the peacebuilding agenda.

46. Within this context, the definition of peace has broadened to encapsulate more than the absence of war or violent conflict, and approaches to peacebuilding are no longer restricted to situations where conflict is manifest or proximate. Actions have diversified and are characterized by a broad, people-centred transformative process supported by "soft power" approaches. This emphasis has driven a more comprehensive approach to not only addressing conflict but also anticipating and preventing its resurgence.

47. The multifaceted roles of young people and women in peacebuilding efforts were explored in more detail in the reporting period. While young people and women were at times prioritized in programming, United Nations entities experienced difficulties in tapping into the potential of young people and women to enable their full participation in conflict prevention and resolution.

48. Human rights remained a constant thread in activities across the United Nations system. The renewed emphasis on human rights in intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace has meant that a broader range of United Nations entities are exploring innovative entry points for programming, for example, how to engage creatively with faith-based actors.

49. Despite significant efforts, notable challenges remain. The reporting period witnessed a continued surge of attacks around the world on culture and fundamental freedoms, ranging from sites of cultural and religious significance to journalists. The issue of impunity also emerged as a key issue at the global level, and the steps taken to end impunity for attacks on cultural heritage and journalists have paved a promising path for the future. Similarly, greater public awareness of the ethical and responsible use of intercultural tools, such as new media, has provoked a stronger global interest in standing up against issues such as hate speech.

50. Building upon the increased cross-pillar engagement, multiple initiatives have increasingly been pursued, together with a broader basis for partnerships. Similarly, there is greater awareness of the value of dialogue in the pursuit of broader development goals, for example, as a tool for environmental development. Participation in intercultural and interreligious dialogue activities was reflected in the actions of several United Nations entities, sometimes extending beyond their traditional mandates. Concurrently, the reporting period brought to the fore some limitations in inter-agency cooperation, which could be strengthened to advance more coherent and integrated action. There is a clear need to acquire a better understanding of intercultural dialogue. Data collection and greater investment are needed to make intercultural dialogue and a culture of peace more operationally relevant. The continued participation of a broad range of stakeholders can strengthen the promotion of a culture of peace and interreligious and intercultural dialogue.